

**Creative Use of Proper Names in Persian****Linguistics**

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Proper names can be creatively and systematically used to conceptualize certain aspects of individuals' actions and behaviors in a particular culture. Combining Kövecses and Radden's (1998) and Brdar and Brdar-Szabó's (2007) account of proper names, it is hypothesized that a metaphonymic model comprising of a basic CATEGORY FOR PROPERTY metonymy followed by a metaphorical tier shapes much of the conceptual structure of figuratively used proper names in Persian. Data analysis indicates that negative salient properties of proper names are predominantly used to metaphorically conceptualize physical and behavioral traits of individuals in Persian. Furthermore, proper names in Persian participate in compound formations as a constituent motivated by a number of factors including morphological (re)segmentation, rhyme and alliteration.

**Introduction<sup>6</sup>**

Proper names have been the subject of extensive linguistic research from different perspectives to shed light on their contribution to linguistic meaning and syntactic categorization. What is intriguing with respect to the behavior of proper names in natural language is what they potentially designate. The controversies over the "scope of reference" of proper names demonstrate a rather conspicuous disharmony among scholars across linguistics schools, particularly compared to the cognitive linguistics paradigm. In traditional semantics, proper names are assumed to uniquely identify descriptions (Russel, 1956), and are conceived as semantically empty and non-translatable (Kripke, 1972). This rigid symbol-to-world designation also "constrains their grammatical behavior to a greater or lesser degree in many languages" (Barcelona, 2004: 12). In cognitive linguistics, on the other hand, any account of proper names includes the encyclopedic knowledge associated with these expressions; their meaning is unavoidably contextually determined and they are treated like other linguistic constructions (Brdar and Brdar-Szabó: 2007). In this approach, meaning relations are dynamically set up within and/or across domains as structured portions of encyclopedic knowledge along with cognitive operations such as metaphor and metonymy, which bring relevant conceptual pieces into correspondence as well as impose alternative construals on linguistic forms.

In this paper, I will consider the creative use (to borrow the term from Benczes, 2006) of these expressions which has less been focused on in cognitive linguistics research to find out how proper names are exploited in certain contexts among the youth to achieve particular communicative purposes, namely, to ridicule some certain physical and behavioral traits of people. By "creative use" I mean novel metaphorical and metonymical proper nouns or expressions containing proper nouns as a constituent. Such expressions possess quite more complex

<sup>6</sup> I wish to thank Réka Benczes for reading and commenting on the previous draft of the paper.

conceptual structures and depend highly on the socio-cultural context for their interpretation. This study will differ from the preceding ones in at least two aspects:

1. With respect to methodology, a combination of Brdar and Brdar-Szabó (2007) and Kövecses and Radden (1998)'s approach to the analysis of proper nouns is adopted particularly in connection with the role of conceptual metaphor and metonymy in setting up figurative tiers to construct the novel meaning which is communicatively intended in the context of situation.

2. Creative use of proper nouns as I intend to explicate invites especially "remotivation" and "phonological analogy" into the game, where the morphological segmentation of some of the proper nouns remotivates pre-existing concepts and provides an appropriate ground for alternative perspectivizations aiming to achieve a certain communicative goal. Moreover, as part of the creativity employed by the conceptualizers, proper nouns are seen as constituents of compounds which appears to be a rather rare linguistic phenomenon.

In the following section, the role of metaphor and metonymy in the construction of the figurative meaning of proper nouns is discussed, then the cognitive linguistic approach tailored for the current data is presented, the last section concludes some detailed analysis of categories of proper nouns in Persian youth talk.

### 1. Cognitive operations and proper nouns

Proper names, like any other linguistic concept, are subject to figurative use. The flexibility of the proper nouns' referents across contexts of use relies to a large extent on the metaphorical and metonymical operations which act upon the conceptual package associated with a particular proper noun. Among the cognitive operations which provide these nouns with a smooth flow of varying referents, conceptual metonymy has an outstanding status, which is not only accountable for the figurative use of proper nouns, but, it is also presumed that, the proper names' status as "proper" is originally derived from common nouns by means of a metonymic relation. In other words, "there often is a metonymically induced change from common nouns to proper names and back to common nouns, hence a metonymic return ticket" (Barcelona, 2004: 12). Within the ICMs which are typically associated with proper names, there are always salient properties which define the conceptual category through DEFINING PROPERTIES FOR THE CATEGORY conceptual metonymy, and any further figurative operation would be based on what these metonymically derived properties provide. This original act of metonymy on the category has a determining consequence for the process of figurative meaning construction out of proper nouns. In simple words, the initial act of metonymy has the effect of providing indefinite referents for the same proper noun because these salient properties can now potentially be mapped onto any class bearing the same properties in varying degrees; From here on, a proper noun refers to a type and not a single unique entity (Barcelona, 2003, 2004; Brdar and Brdar-Szabó, 2007). The following examples can clearly indicate how conceptual metonymy affects the use of proper nouns:

1. *George Clooney* has received three Golden Globe Awards for his work as an actor.

A girl to his partner:

2. You're my *George Clooney*.

In (1) the proper name has a unique referent i.e, George Clooney, the American Hollywood actor. The act of reference in (1) may evoke stereotypical properties associated with George Clooney, such as being very handsome, attractive, being a human rights activist, etc. by means of CATEGORY FOR DEFINING PROPERTY but this cognitive operation cannot alter what the proper noun mainly designates, which is George Clooney the American actor. What is clearly seen here is how the act of reference is enriched by conceptual metonymy. In (2) on the other hand, by *George Clooney*, she complements her boyfriend by assigning him the prototypical features of the American actor (as a paragon), namely, being sexy and attractive. This is a clear case of a figurative use of a proper name, where stereotypical features of the GEORGE CLOONEY ICM are mentally accessed through the same conceptual metonymy that are in turn mapped onto the target concept (individual). As a result, the proper noun refers to a type of person rather than an actual person. Whether this further mapping is metonymic or metaphoric (which is assumed to yield the ultimate figurative meaning), how complex the involved figurative processes are and what competing theories exist will be discussed in the following paragraph.

Many cognitive linguists have emphasized the role of metaphor and metonymy in figuratively used proper names, most particularly the conspicuous presence of conceptual metonymy in giving rise to paragons as ideal members of the category (Lakeoff, 1987; Kövecses and Radden, 1998) and the pervasive social effect of such metonymic models (Kövecses, 2006). This cognitive device has also been found to be the key means of creating surnames in German through metonymic relationships such as IMPORTANT UTENSIL FOR PERSON, SALIENT QUALITY FOR PERSON, and PLACE OF ORIGIN FOR PERSON (Jäkel, 1999). In two cross linguistic studies, (Barcelona, 2003, 2004), conceptualizing figurative proper names is performed by virtue of a series of successive metonymical mappings; Barcelona puts the idea forward that “all of the violations of the grammatical constraints on proper nouns have a metonymic motivation” (Barcelona, 2004: 19) which further emphasizes the central role of metonymy in grammar (Langacker, 1999: 67). Metonymy in other categories of proper nouns such as location and organization has also been found to be regularly and productively present (Market and Nissim, 2006). Of course, there are other studies which capture the other side of the metonymy-metaphor scale in the conceptualization of figurative proper nouns considering metaphor as the main cognitive apparatus involved. Wee (2006) focuses on the metaphorical use of proper names, especially the way they fulfill their role as source domains in metaphorical correspondences. Following Quinn (1991) Wee suggests that metaphorical proper nouns are related to a particular culture and are analyzable as reflections of a salient cultural model. The interaction of proper nouns and culture as indicated in the Persian examples shows up in cases where the interpretation of creative proper names necessarily demands one's familiarity with deeply rooted cultural schemas. Koller (2009) studies the cognitive structure of brands (as a type of proper noun) and suggests that “brands are made comprehensible by being conceptualized as an ideal person endowed with the traits that are

positively evaluated in corporate discourse” (p. 45). What is noteworthy is Koller’s study is the dominance of the conceptual metaphor BRANDS ARE LIVING ORGANISMS in the conceptualization of brands. The scholarly works on the figurative meaning of proper nouns mentioned above, have dealt with either metonymy or metaphor as the sheer cognitive device involved and it is only in a couple of works such as Goossens (1990) and Brdar and Brdar-Szabó (2007) where the nature of figuratively used proper names is regarded as “metaphonymic”, i.e. the figurative meaning of proper nouns are derived from the interaction of metonymy and metaphor in some loops or figurative tiers (Brdar and Brdar-Szabó, *ibid*, p.129-130), or in Goossens’ terms “these expressions count as metonymy within metaphors. (p. 130). In Brdar and Brdar-Szabó (2007) the process of meaning construction in figurative proper names has a metonymic basis and feeds the metaphorical mapping when the proper name is post modified in constructional schemas like Det + X<sub>personal name</sub> + of Y as in *the Zidane of 2020*. The major difference between the current study and its predecessors is the examination of metaphor-metonymy interaction within proper names of different categories (not only paragons) and the role of proper nouns in creative compounds (metaphorical and metonymical compounds). This more compact process of figurative meaning construction is clearly seen in Persian proper names, which are creatively used to express highly complex and culture-specific ideas about people as well as other entities.

## 2. Data collection and methodology

To collect data, three Persian websites were consulted:

[www.aryaadib.blogfa.com](http://www.aryaadib.blogfa.com)

[www.noandishaan.com](http://www.noandishaan.com)

[www.iran-eng.com](http://www.iran-eng.com)

In these websites new Persian expressions popular among the youth are alphabetically provided. The main characteristic of all the cited expressions is that they are predominantly utilized informally and they mainly denote concepts such as “outdatedness”, “social stratification”, and “general appearance”, each of which demanding sophisticated socio-cultural knowledge for their interpretations. The proper names collected were grouped into five categories based on the type of the proper name that they refer to, namely movie and cartoon characters, name of countries and cities, name of individuals, famous brands, and famous organizations.

The approach to characterizing the cognitive structure of proper names in this study is a revised version of Kövecses and Radden (1998), Barcelona (2003, 2004) and Brdar and Brdar-Szabó (2007). In all these studies, following Lakoff’s (1987) account of paragons and social stereotypes, the basis of the conceptualization of figuratively used proper names is taken to be derived from the CATEGORY FOR CHARACTERISTIC PROPERTY conceptual metonymy, based on an ICM knowledge base containing language users’ total encyclopedic knowledge about the bearer of individual names (Brdar and Brdar-Szabó, *ibid*: 129). The main controversy over the derivation of figurative meaning of proper names mainly results from the conceptual tiers, their succession and

the interaction of metaphor and metonymy. These competing accounts of paragons can better be compared by citing an example from Barcelona (2003:24):

### 3. Cervantes is Spain's Shakespeare

For Kövecses and Radden (1998) there is only one conceptual metonymy involved here, i.e., CATEGORY FOR DEFINING PROPERTY, whereby well-known individuals are metonymically recategorized as a class on the basis of their defining, stereotypical properties (p.54). The individual name (the whole) acts as a cognitive reference point to provide mental access to the stereotypical properties (part). In (3), Shakespeare's "immense literary talent" as a representative property of Shakespeare ICM is mentally accessed through the CATEGORY FOR DEFINING PROPERTY conceptual metonymy. What is missing here is how this characteristic property is mapped onto the target domain (person). In Barcelona's view, the process of meaning construction of figurative proper names is thoroughly metonymic containing at least three metonymic mappings. According to him, first a conceptual model of the standard referent of the paragon is mentally formed and through CHARACTERISTIC PROPERTY FOR INDIVIDUAL metonymy (a PART FOR WHOLE metonymy more generally in contrast to Kövecses and Radden which consider the same metonymy but in reverse direction), stereotypical properties of the individual (Shakespeare in this case) stand out. Second, the metonymic model formed in the first step mentally creates a class of individuals (as another conceptual model) potentially possessing the same characteristic properties taken from the basically formed conceptual metonymic model. The Conceptual metonymic model (let's call it model A) plays the role of a source domain to metonymically map onto the conceptual model B (the second metonymic model) as the target domain. The conceptual metonymy formed between A and B is IDEAL MEMBER OF THE CATEGORY FOR CATEGORY whereby Shakespeare is defined as the ideal member of the category with immense literary talent as his characteristic property (Barcelona, 2004:22). The model provided by Brdar and Brdar-Szabó (2007) comprises a series of metonymic tiers followed by metaphorical mappings. The first metonymic tier is a WHOLE FOR PART metonymy which underspecifies the meaning of paragons in a network of overlapped subdomains. Furthermore, they posit that the meaning of the construction is further and further enriched and revised depending on the cognitive operation involved. They also suggest that constructions of this type i.e. paragons in Det+X<sub>personal name</sub> + of Y constructional schemas can be treated as cases of conceptual integration (p.135). The common aspect of the above mentioned models is the emphasis on the metonymic motivation of the paragonic models.

The examples from Persian analyzed in this paper are typically proper names comprising a complex network of concepts employing both metaphor and metonymy simultaneously. These instances of figurative proper names are not pre or post-modified; rather, cognitive operations act upon the ICM associated with the referent of the proper name in a more complex and compact manner. No doubt, in almost many cases we will be dealing with clear cases of conceptual blending based on metonymic models. I will attempt to demonstrate how metonymic mappings provide inputs for further metonymic and/or metaphorical relationships and in what ways key cultural concepts are repacked through the figurative use of proper nouns.

### 3. Data Analysis

As it was briefly mentioned in the previous section, the proper names collected are categorized in five groups and then analyzed accordingly.

#### 3.1. *Movie and cartoon characters*

**Oshin** jan! baskon inghadr az badbakhti nagou.

**Oshin** dear! Stop it that much from misery don't say

Dear **Oshin**! Stop talking that much about misery and problems.

**Oshin**: a miserable poor girl or woman

Around 20 years ago, a very popular Japanese TV series called Oshin was broadcast of Iranian TV channels, which lasted for about two years. Oshin featured a Japanese girl who had a miserable life; she lost her mother and as a child she had to tackle with poorness, cruel step mother and so on and so forth. This example is typically used in informal conversations to picture a female with a hard bitter life. Oshin comprises of an ICM containing the total encyclopedic knowledge that Persian speakers typically have about this character; the whole ICM provides mental access to the categories salient properties, i.e. being poor, being an orphan, being raised under extremely tough conditions by virtue of CATEGORY FOR DEFINING PROPERTY conceptual metonymy. This metonymy alters the proper name's status to a type or class to be the input for the following metaphorical tire. In other words, the output of the conceptual metonymy acts as the source domain to structure the target domain (person) through a similarity-based generic conceptual metaphor REAL IS VIRTUAL.

Aghaye **Pinokio** gharare reis e sherkat beshe

Mr. **Pinokio** is going to manager of company be

Mr. **Pinokio** is going to be the company manager

**Pinokio**: A liar who has a long nose

Pinokio is the name of a popular Japanese cartoon and its main character Pinokio is a boy who is so naïve and hence easily fooled by others. Every time he told a lie his nose started to lengthen. Again in this example, the construction of a figurative meaning for the proper name "pinokio" is facilitated by the CATEGORY FOR DEFINING PROPERTY by providing mental access to the salient properties of the whole ICM. The active zone which is the CHARACTERISTIC PROPERTIES of the character are directly interpreted as a result of the application of metonymy and consequently feed the metaphorical operation which follows the metonymic tier. Similarly to the previous example, the HUMANS ARE MOVIE/CARTOON CHARACTER (a submetaphor of REAL IS VIRTUAL) metaphor is responsible for the ultimate figurative meaning of the proper name. The target domain as structured by the source domain (characteristic properties of Pinokio) provides

sufficient information about the prospective company manager namely, having a long nose, telling many lies to others, being simply influenced and deceived by others, etc.

### 3.2. *Name of countries and cities*

#### 3.2.1. *Alman*: Nazi Abad (a neighborhood in Tehran)

*Alman* “Germany” refers to a neighborhood in the southern of Tehran called “Nazi Abad”.

As it is obvious in the above definition, the original name of the neighborhood is “Nazi Abad” which is humorously referred to as ‘Alman’, meaning ‘Germany’ in Persian. What links these two proper names together? The “Nazi” in “Nazi Abad” is a popular female name which is homophonous with “Nazi Germans”. The homophony remotivates and thus evokes the GERMANY ICM. This frame metonymically refers to one of its salient members ‘Nazi’, a subdomain within the German frame with its own characteristic properties. Two conceptual metonymies simultaneously apply to the GERMANY ICM, one of which is the CATEGORY FOR THE SALIENT MEMBER OF THE CATEGORY whereby Nazi is directed to within GERMANY ICM, and NAZI as a subdomain provides access to its defining properties by means of the same CATEGORY FOR DEFINING PROPERTIES conceptual metonymy. This metonymic model which is composed of two metonymic tiers is the basis for the metaphorical relationship between Nazi Germans and residents of Nazi Abad in southern of Tehran. The properties defining the NAZI conceptual category participate in the final metaphorical tier as the source domain to map onto the target domain which is NAZI ABAD through the NAZI ABAD RESIDENTS ARE NAZI GERMANS metaphor. What seems to have metaphorically connected these two domains is that the rate of criminal activities such as murder and aggression in the southern regions in Tehran is rather high which analogically can be matched with properties that are typically assigned to Nazi Germans. These sets of metonymical and metaphorical mappings account for the main reasons why a neighborhood in Tehran is referred to as Germany.

#### 3.2.2. *Pakestan*: bathroom

This country name is figuratively used to mean an apparently unrelated concept, that is, “bathroom”. Persian speakers creatively reconceptualize the proper noun by segmenting it into two already meaningful morphemes, *pak* “clean” and *stan*, “a productive suffix denoting place”. Creating novel linguistic forms for already existing meanings is carried out by remotivating (through morphological segmentation as the first step) homonymies and recruiting them to convey their conventional meaning in a new compound consisting of a fully lexicalized form “*pak*” and a fully productive suffix “*stan*”. No doubt, cognitive operations apply to the construction and therefore specify the intended meaning. The conceptual metonymy at work is the RESULT OF THE ACTION FOR THE ACTION that applies to the first constituent “*pak*” and the PLACE OF ACTION FOR ACTION that acts upon the second constituent “*stan*”. Unlike the preceding examples, in this case the figuratively used proper name lacks a metaphorical tier and the conceptualization is mainly performed by means of a morphological segmentation along with two conceptual metonymies.

The proper name in this meaning is only informally and humorously utilized and has not been able to replace “bathroom” as the conventional linguistic form.

### 3.3. *Name of political figures and celebrities*

#### 3.3.1. *Forough Farokhzad: A young beautiful female poet*

Forough Farokhzad (1935-1967) is one of the most influential female poets among the young generation. She was a controversial modernist poet. This name is used by boys quite a lot to figuratively refer to young beautiful girls who also have a sense of poetry or talk in a literary fashion. The cognitive operation which seems to act upon the domain matrix of ForoughFarokhzad is the CATEGORY FOR DEFINING PROPERTY metonymy. The category name stands for or metonymically refers to its most conspicuous properties (viz. being beautiful and being a poet). This act of metonymy certifies that the whole category can indefinitely refer to all individuals who in a similar fashion possess the same characteristic properties. The final cognitive operation which brings the domain of FOROUGH FAROKHZAD and other individuals' domain into correlation is the ORDINARY PEOPLE ARE CELEBRITIES. In this manner, the paragonic model can metaphorically refer to whoever who can share some conceptual aspects with those of the source domain (the derived metonymic model).

#### 3.3.2. *Hafez Asad: lion's cage*

Hafez Asad is the Syrian late president who is known by almost all Iranians due to the close diplomatic relations between the two countries since the 1979 Islamic revolution. A major difference between this paragon and other instances previously discussed is that surprisingly, no salient property of Hafez Asad is employed or metonymically referred to for the construction of the figurative meaning. What takes place is the remotivation of the paragon's constituents' meaning *hafez* “protector” and *asad* “lion” which are brought together to form a compound using a novel conceptual and hence linguistic association. The conceptual metonymy engaged in the formation of the compound is FUNCTION OF INSTRUMENT FOR INSTRUMENT whereby a cage's main function which is protecting or surrounding the animal stands for the metal fence itself. In other words, conceptual metonymy plays the role of a conceptual bridge between two coding systems, i.e., Arabic and Persian, by virtue of which Arabic linguistic forms are exploited for the construction of Persian figurative meanings. Metaphor does not seem to be playing a role exceptionally, as no properties of the proper name is used to structure target individual domains.

### 3.4. *Famous brands*

#### 3.4.1. *Pars Khodro: a barking walking dog*

Pars Khodro is one of the main car manufacturers in Iran. Once more, the brand name is segmented into constituents through remotivation to recall the conventional meanings associated with them other than what it typically denotes as a brand. To linguistically encode the concept of a “barking walking dog”, which typically is expressed by a phrase or sentence, language users resort



to compound formation; the brand name's linguistic structure is considered a good candidate for constructing a complex novel idea. As a brand name, it comprises of pars "Persian" and khodro "automobile", but remotivation of this construction for the sake of deriving a novel complex idea recalls another homonymic meaning of pars which is "barking" as well as a related meaning of khodro (other than car) which means "something that moves automatically". To recruit concepts for new associations as a compound, the conceptual metonymy CATEGORY FOR SALIENT PROPERTIES calls attention to Pars Khodro's main negative property (as a car brand) which is selling automobiles with low quality, as a main complaint of customers of this brand is that after a short time their car starts making constant noise. This metonymic model of Pars Khodro acts as the source domain of DOGS ARE AUTOMOBILES conceptual metaphor which maps the negative characteristics of cars onto the domain of dogs. In other words, dog's constant barking is understood as the constant noise made by low quality cars. The same cognitive operations apply to the second constituent of the compound "khodro"; the whole frame of KHODRO "automobile" metonymically stands for one of its main properties which is moving automatically. This metonymic tier comes to feed the following metaphorical mapping which is formed by DOGS ARE AUTOMOBILES metaphor. Furthermore, in this new compound, the first constituent undergoes a further metonymic operation: an attribute of dog (barking) stands for dog as A PART FOR WHOLE metonymy.

3.4.2. *CG*: a low class and unprestigious person who loves riding and exchanging motorcycles

CG 125 is one of the most popular models of the Honda motorcycle which has come to be particularly the favorite vehicle of the lower class in Iran. It is high quality with a rather reasonable price and has been able to meet the satisfaction of its customers for a good number of years. In spite of the positive qualities connected with this brand in the minds of Iranians, in deriving a figurative meaning of the brand, those positive traits are obliterated and instead negative properties stand out. A chain of metonymic relationships accounts for the prominence of negative qualities of CG. Firstly, the model of the motorcycle stands for the brand through a PART FOR WHOLE metonymy (considering HONDA as the whole ICM embracing CG as one of its subdomains), then CG as a conceptual category calls attention to its prominent features (being cheap, unprestigious) through the application of CATEGORY FOR SALIENT PROPERTIES metonymy. The output of the metonymic chains formed within the HONDA frame provides appropriate grounds for a metaphorical relationship between the salient properties of CG as a subdomain and the target domain which is typically a MOTORCYCLE RIDER by means of HUMANS ARE VEHICLES conceptual metaphor.

### 3.5. *Famous Organizations*

3.5.1. *khabargozari e tas*: a bald person who spreads gossips.

News agency of tas

Tas News Agency

ItarTas News Agency was quite famous in Iran, especially during Iran-Iraq war which lasted for eight years. It was notorious for apparently spreading unreal news about Iran's insistence on continuing the war against Iraq, despite the international community's request for ending it and was always accused of adopting hostile positions towards the Iranian regime. The same conceptual metonymy seems to be the basis of the figurative meaning derived from this proper name: CATEGORY FOR DEFINING PROPERTY makes prototypical features of TAS NEWS AGENCY (label of the cognitive model formed) mentally accessible and therefore makes them applicable to any class of individuals which might indicate some sort of similarity to those properties through GOSSIPERS ARE NEWS AGENCIES conceptual metaphor. The presence of the bald person as part of the meaning of the figurative proper name results from the remotivation of the *tas* which retakes on its conventional meaning in Persian i.e. "bald". It should be noted that the word "*tas*" in Persian conveys negative connotations in referring to a bald person that adds more negativity to the act of spreading gossips by an individual as well. This constituent also undergoes the PHYSICAL ATTRIBUTE FOR PERSON metonymy to be able to coordinate with the newly formed conceptual configuration.

### 3.5.2. *Sazman Sanjesh*

Organization assessment

*Assessment Organization:* A person who asks too many questions.

In Iran all kinds of official tests, including university entrance exams, are held by an organization called "Assessment Organization". This proper name reminds Iranian students of *Konkour* "university entrance exam", and recalls hard tests with a lot of questions which usually evokes virtually unpleasant feelings for those who want to follow their educational goals by passing the test and enter into university. The proper name consists of a frame with its own properties and subdomains, the most prominent of which negative impressions arising from answering many hard questions in a limited time that are metonymically accessed through the CATEGORY FOR SALIENT PROPERTY metonymy. Given that questioning people for acquiring information is socially unacceptable and negatively valued, a nosy person or an individual curious about people's affairs is conceptualized as Assessment Organization by means of A NOSY PERSON IS ASSESSMENT ORGANIZATION metaphor. This way, the act of questioning is more tangibly negatively conceptualized to express conceptualizers' discomfort and dislike with being questioned particularly about their private lives. Furthermore, "the rhyming effect and alliteration have an influential role in the compound formation by motivating the selection of the component nouns in the expression" (Benczes, 2012: 4).

## 3.6. *Names of individuals*

### 3.6.1. *Javad Bazar*

*Javad market:* a place where socially low people commute

Javad is a traditional religious male name which is currently out of fashion and very rarely chosen for new born babies. This name is associated with some negatively valued concepts such as being socially low, outdated, and belonging to village most prominently. As it can be seen, this proper name together with the word *bazar* “market” is utilized in a noun-noun compound to figuratively conceptualize neighborhoods or places occupied by a certain group of people who are taken to be old-fashioned and unprestigious, mostly people who come from the suburbs. These prototypical features of JAVAD have made a highly conventional adjective of it by itself as well as in combination with other nouns in compounds. Once more, The ICM of the proper name metonymically stands for its salient features and the head constituent ‘bazar’ also undergoes a PART FOR WHOLE metonymy to refer to the crowded places which ‘bazar’ is a prototypical member of. The derived metonymic model of the proper name Javad for application to other domains has to rely on conceptual metaphor. This metaphor embraces a wide variety of target domains, that is, the “range of the target” (Kövecses, 2005) of the proper name triggers not only individuals, but also ideas, events, and human actions. As a result, many of what Iranians might do, can be metaphorically *Javad* (as an adjective) if the target domain bears some similarity with the salient features of the proper name.

### 3.6.2. *Mirza moghava*

Mirza cardboard

*Mirza Moghava*: a shivering thin person

Miraz is an old fashioned male name which can only be found among old men living in villages. This name typically recalls a very old man living in the suburbs. These properties are metonymically accessed within the frame of MIRZA as one of the constituents of this compound which is followed by the conceptual metaphor OLD MEN ARE MIRZA through which salient properties of this name are mapped onto the target domain, most importantly the oldness which the whole MIRZA frame stands for. The other constituent which shares its properties for the figurative meaning making is *moghava* “cardboard”. First of all, cardboard metonymically stands for its salient properties, namely, instability and thinness via the CATEGORY FOR DEFINING PROPERTIES metonymy. This metonymic model is the basis of the metaphorical mapping of the cardboard’s properties onto the target domain (person) via the HUMANS ARE OBJECTS. Obviously, the second constituent rhymes with the first one, plus there is alliteration (both constituents starting with the same consonant), acting as motivating factors.

### Concluding remarks

In this chapter, I attempted to explore the semantic structure of proper names in Persian within the paradigm of cognitive linguistics. The cognitive pattern suggested for the analysis of the figurative meaning of proper nouns was a revised model of Kövecses and Radden (1998) and Brdar and Brdar-Szabo (2007), which bases the figurative meaning making of proper names on a metonymic model derived from the application of CATEGORY FOR DEFINING PROPERTY conceptual metonymy (Kövecses and Radden, 1998) which provides a smooth flow of references for the

paragon or the other types of proper nouns via altering the unique referent associated with the proper noun. These salient features of the proper names interact well with metaphorical correspondences which map these properties onto the target domains. Data analysis indicates that in almost all cases, this metaphonymic model can be well relied on to account for the configuration of meaning in figurative proper names. Moreover, it reveals this model's privilege over the preceding ones (for example, Barcelona's account of proper names) by being less complex. Instead of considering two metonymic tiers to derive the paragonic model, applying the CATEGORY FOR PROPERTY conceptual metonymy proposed by Kövecses and Radden (1998) can provide access to the defining properties of the proper nouns and it is the following metaphorical tier which maps these properties onto the class of individuals or entities as a more straightforward account of the cognitive operations applied on proper names. Another significant point revealed by the data analysis is the active presence of proper names in creative compounds as "they represent a remarkably efficient method to express quite complex ideas in an economical manner" (Benczes, 2010: 78). In some noun-noun compounds, such as *Mirza moghava* and *Sazman Sanjesh*, the novel expression, in addition to metaphor and metonymy is motivated by rhyming effects and alliteration and in some others, morphological (re)segmentation is considered a significant motivating factor which provides a fertile ground for the further cognitive operations, such as *Pakestan* and *Pars Khodro*. This makes the structure of the compound much more complex compared to other uses of proper nouns. This implies that proper nouns can successfully be involved in the process of conceptual integration which downplays their unique status claimed by objectivist semantics. Surprisingly, Persian speakers appear to pick out mostly negative properties of proper names for the construction of novel expressions. In most cases the salient properties are to figuratively conceptualize people's negative physical and behavioral characteristics such as general appearance, lying, poorness, social class, gossiping, etc, out of which humiliating the individuals' social status stands out. Furthermore, the output of the metonymic tier in figurative proper names predominantly acts as the source domain for a further metaphorical correspondence.

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